

## ***The Priest King: Psalm 110***

**(Hebrews 7:23–25; Acts 2:33–36; Matthew 22:43)**

**MAIN IDEA:** *Psalm 110 reveals God's chosen King—exalted to His right hand and appointed as an eternal Priest—who rules with unmatched authority, defeats every enemy, and draws His people near to God forever.*

**BACKGROUND / CONTEXT:** *"A Psalm of David. "This is significant because David is speaking about "my Lord" in verse one—someone greater than himself. This cannot be any royal descendant of David. Verse one is Yahweh's command to David's Lord—that is, David's divine superior. Historically, David likely (it is not explicitly stated) composed this psalm near the height of his reign, perhaps during a period of military stability or reflection on God's covenant as recorded in 2 Samuel 7. The cultural context, important for understanding the text, is this: Israel's kings came from the tribe of Judah. Israel's priests came from the tribe of Levi. These roles were always separate. Yet, Psalm 110 speaks of a King who is also a Priest—a union no ordinary Israelite could lawfully hold. So, King David, under the Spirit's inspiration (Matt. 22:43), foresaw a future royal figure who would be both King and Priest, both a sovereign ruler and a sympathetic intercessor. The NT says only Christ fulfills that role.*

**CHRIST CONNECTION:** Psalm 110 stands at the crossroads of Old Testament expectation and New Testament fulfillment. No other psalm is quoted more often in the New Testament because *only* Jesus Christ fits its portrait. *Jesus* is the exalted King seated at God's right hand (Acts 2:33–36). *Jesus* is the eternal High Priest after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 7:23–25). *Jesus* conquers every enemy—including sin, Satan, and death—and establishes a kingdom that cannot be shaken (1 Cor. 15:25; Rev. 11:15). This psalm announces ahead of time the arrival of the Priest-King the world desperately needs: One who not only rules with authority but also understands our weakness, intercedes for us, and brings us safely to God.

### **1. CHRIST THE EXALTED KING WHO RULES FROM ZION (vv. 1–3)**

- A. **The Father's declaration (v.1) —The King enthroned**
  - God exalts His chosen King and seats Him at His right hand—the position of ultimate authority, honor, and sovereignty. Jesus Himself cites this verse to describe His identity (Matt. 22:41–46). Peter preaches it at Pentecost (Acts 2:33–36): *Jesus is Lord. Jesus is enthroned. Jesus reigns now.*
- B. **Zion (v.2), throughout the Psalms, represents:**
  - God's dwelling among His people; The place where God's reign is expressed on earth. Zion is the center of divine authority and salvation.
  - *In Psalm 2, God installed His King on Zion.*
  - *In Psalm 110, God sends His scepter (royal authority) out of Zion.*
  - *This is pointing forward to the heavenly Zion—the place Hebrews 12 says believers have "already come to," where Jesus now reigns over His church.*
- C. **The King's People (v.3) — A willing and holy army**
  - The people of this King do not serve reluctantly. They come freely, joyfully, "in holy splendor." They belong to Him because He has transformed their hearts.
- D. **NT CONNECTION: The Reigning King**
  - **Acts 2:33–36** — Jesus is exalted at God's right hand.
  - **1 Cor. 15:25** — He must reign until all enemies are under His feet.
  - **Eph. 1:20–23** — All authority is His.
- E. **APPLICATION:** *If following Jesus feels burdensome, the issue is your heart, not His commands or inability—Jesus came to renew them. When life feels chaotic, recall: Nothing that threatens you is above Him. Your stress, fear, and uncertainty are not in control—Christ is. His people should obey and serve Him willingly and joyfully.*

### **2. CHRIST THE ETERNAL PRIEST (v. 4)**

- A. **Jesus is the King-Priest who will judge, conquer, and restore**
- B. **The Oath of God (v.4) — An unbreakable appointment (an irrevocable declaration)**
  - The priest is not temporary, not replaceable, not weak
- C. **Melchizedek is both King of Salem and Priest of God Most High (v. 4)**
  - He predates the Levitical priesthood; His priesthood is unending and superior
  - Appears in Genesis 14:18-20
- D. **NT CONNECTION: Christ fulfills Melchizedek's pattern**
  - Hebrews 7 makes this explicit: He is the guarantor of a better covenant (v.22). He holds His priesthood permanently (v.24). He can save completely those who draw near to God through Him because He always lives to intercede (vv. 23–25).
- E. **Why the priesthood matters to Christians**
  - A king can rule you, but only Christ our High Priest **can bring you near to God** (Heb 7:25; 10:19–22); Only Jesus, by His once-for-all sacrifice, opens the way.
  - A king can govern your life, but only Christ our High Priest **can forgive our sin** (1 John 1:7–9; Hebrews 9:11–14; Hebrews 10:12–14); No human priest forgives. No sacrament forgives. Only Jesus' blood cleanses sin—fully forever.
  - A king can lead you in battle, but *only Christ our High Priest* can heal your shame (Hebrews 4:15–16; 9:14; Psalm 34:5). Kings deal with outward enemies; Christ deals with the inward wounds—guilt, condemnation, and shame—by applying His grace and mercy to your heart. In Jesus, you have both.
- F. **APPLICATION:** *When you feel guilty, recall that your Priest stands for you. When you feel unworthy—remember, your Priest intercedes for you joyfully and eternally. When you feel alone—remember, your Priest understands you (Heb. 4:15). You have a Savior who brings you near to God. Every barrier your sin built—Jesus tore down with His blood.*

### **3. CHRIST THE DIVINE WARRIOR (vv. 5–7)**

- A. **The King-Priest who executes God's judgment, conquers evil, and ensures His people's endurance.**
- B. **NT CONNECTION: The Lord at your right hand (v. 5) —** The scene shifts from Christ seated in authority (v. 1) to Christ **rising in judgment**. The King now fights on God's behalf. This is the Messiah returning in victory—judging evil and establishing justice. The New Testament applies this role to Jesus at His return (Rev. 19:11–16; Acts 17:31). He fights not for political territory but to eradicate evil, defend His people, and purify creation.
- C. **Final Judgment (v.5–6) —** These verses portray the Messiah executing judgment among the nations: The Messiah brings righteous judgment to the nations. Evil is not ignored, injustice is not forgotten, oppressors are not excused. This fulfills the promise of Psalm 2 and echoes Revelation 19's portrayal of Christ the Warrior. Psalm 110 teaches that **justice is not denied—only delayed**.
- D. **Poetic picture of the King who presses on in victory and triumph (v. 7) —** this poetic image portrays a victorious warrior pausing briefly to refresh Himself, not because He is defeated, but because He is unstoppable.
- E. **APPLICATION:** *Christ's victory ensures your endurance. The King who defeated sin, Satan, and death (1 Cor. 15:24–26) is not weary or overwhelmed. Because His head is lifted in triumph; you can lift your head in hope (Luke 21:28). You may feel exhausted in your spiritual battles— but do not forget that your King does not faint, does not slow, and does not lose.*